

January 12, 2004

TO All Interested Agencies, Organizations, and Persons
NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY
PACHECO STATE PARK PRELIMINARY GENERAL PLAN
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

A Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been prepared by the California Department of Parks and Recreation (Department) for the Pacheco State Park Preliminary General Plan (General Plan). The Department is the lead agency, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), responsible for preparation of this document.

Project Location

The entrance to Pacheco State Park is off Dinosaur Point Road, south of State Route 152, between Interstates 101 and 5, approximately 24 miles west of the City of Los Banos and 20 miles east of Gilroy in the counties of Merced and Santa Clara.

Project Description

The proposed project is the development of a General Plan for Pacheco State Park. In accordance with Public Resources Code §5002.2 referencing General Plan guidelines and §21000 et seq. concerning the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) the Department is preparing a General Plan for the purpose of guiding future development activities and management objectives at the Park. The Park is a recent addition to the State Park system, opened to the public in 1997 and has not had a General Plan prepared to date. A portion of the 6,900 acre parcel, donated by the late Paula Fatjo, a descendant of Francisco Pacheco is currently open to the public for hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding and interpretive programs. The land around Pacheco was originally part of El Rancho San Luis Gonzaga, a 48,000-acre Mexican land grant deeded to Juan Perez Pacheco in 1843. The Park contains a rich array of natural and cultural resources, several residences, garages, paddocks, and outbuildings and is characterized by scenic expanses of open land laced with old ranch roads. Portions of the property are leased for the production of energy through wind turbines and cattle grazing.

The General Plan sets forth management zones that are based on existing conditions and resources and provide an overall intention for managing different areas of the Park recognizing the uniqueness qualities and diversity of the site. Additionally, the Plan contains a comprehensive set of park-wide goals and guidelines for the long-term direction of the Park. A number of Park improvements are identified in three alternatives including the development of a recreational vehicle and an equestrian campground, a visitor center, re-use and rehabilitation of the existing buildings and additional interpretive programs. All alternatives provide for long term natural and cultural resource management and sustainable development for the Park.

Summary of Impacts

The EIR is a program-level analysis of the potential environmental impacts associated with the Preliminary General Plan. No significant environmental impacts would occur as a result of the proposed project.

Public Comment Period

The 45-day public comment period for this Draft EIR will commence on January 12, 2004 and conclude on February 26, 2004. Copies of the Preliminary General Plan and Draft EIR will be available at the Four Rivers Sector office (31426 Gonzaga Road, Gustine, CA, 95322, 209-826-1197) at the Los Banos Library (1312 South 7th Street, Los Banos, CA 93635, 209-826-5254), at the address noted below and at The Department website at <http://www.parks.ca.gov/>. Once there, click on "General Plans in Progress" in the right margin. Please submit comments in writing to the address provided below. Comment letters must be postmarked by February 26, 2004.

California Department of Parks and Recreation
Central Service Center
21 Lower Ragsdale Road
Monterey, CA 93940
Contact: Terry Lee, ASLA

